



SPANISH STUDIES IN GRANADA

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2023-2024

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I. INTRODUCTION

The information provided in this handbook is based in part on information given by previous students who have lived and studied in Spain and by visiting faculty and staff from the University of Illinois. If you have any questions, please feel free to call our office. We have made every effort to give you accurate and up-to-date information on the program and what to expect during your stay in Spain. As circumstances are constantly changing and evolving in Spain, we expect that you will find some differences and perhaps even some errors. Let us know what you think; your input will be important. We also hope that you will share this information with family and friends so that they will know what to expect from your stay in Spain and can help you prepare for your time abroad.

II. IMPORTANT NAMES AND ADDRESSES

LAS International Programs

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HOSTAL ATENAS

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18010 Granada, Spain

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Avenida Juan Gómez "Juanito", 8

Edificio Lucía 1º-C

29640 Fuengirola (Málaga)

Tel.: 011.34.952.47.48.91

Fax: 011.34.952.46.51.89

CEGRÍ (Centro Granadí de Español)

C. Sacristía de San Matías, 12

18009 Granada, Spain

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III. THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PROGRAM IN GRANADA

FLIGHT INFORMATION

The advisor at Illinois will provide students with a recommended flight itinerary and deadline to arrive in Granada shortly after they have committed to their program. Group transportation from the Granada airport to the hostel for orientation will be provided for students who arrive by the given date and time. Miguel Angel Galindo, the Resident Director and Nerea Muguerza, the Assistant Director in Granada, will be waiting for students with a private bus at the airport. The group will then board a bus destined for **Hostal Atenas**. Look for the Resident Director wearing an Illinois t-shirt.

If you are not using the group flight option:

You are required to give your flight itinerary to the Illinois Abroad office. You must meet the group at **Hostal Atenas on the specified arrival date and time** to begin orientation. If you arrive early in Granada, you will be responsible for your own accommodations until the program begins (you can check with the hostel to see if they have availability, but you will be responsible for the cost associated until the day the group flight arrives).

Independent Transportation from Málaga to Granada:

You have one option. Please check Spanish websites for up-to-date information about current prices and times:

1. **Bus.** www.alsa.es Once you leave your Arrivals Terminal at the Málaga airport (Floor 0) and exit the building, you will find de ALSA bus stop to Granada in front of you. It is highly recommended that you buy your ticket online beforehand.

Independent Transportation from Madrid to Granada:

You have several options. Please check Spanish websites for up-to-date information about current prices and times:

1. **Air.** There are many airlines traveling to and around Spain. The Granada airport code is GRX.
2. **Train.** www.renfe.es In Madrid, take a taxi or the metro to "Estación de Atocha," in the south of Madrid. There are 6 bullet trains that go to Granada per day. The duration is between 3 hrs and 35' and 4 hrs and 55' depending on the amount of stops the train will make. When you get to the train station in Granada, take a taxi to your hostel.
3. **Bus.** www.alsa.es Take a taxi to the "Estación del Sur". The bus goes directly to Granada. Usually there are buses every hour or so from 7:00 am to 1:00 am. Trip takes about 5 hours. Take a taxi to your hostel. It is highly recommended that you buy your ticket online beforehand.

Caution: Most transatlantic flights will arrive early in the morning. If you're connecting through another European city, you could have additional delays. Calculate 1 to 2 hours to get through customs in Madrid plus 1/2 to 1 hour to get from the airport to the bus or train station plus 1/2 hour at least to buy your ticket and find the platform, etc. Then you have to get from the Granada terminal to the hostel. It is unlikely that you will be able to catch a bus before 11 am or 1 pm (getting you into Granada at 4:15 or 6:15 pm) and the evening trains at 6 pm and 8:00 pm (getting you into Granada at 10:00 pm and 11:50 pm respectively) will be the only train possibilities on the same day you fly in to Madrid. To catch the early buses or trains, you'll have to stay overnight in Madrid and get to the terminal EARLY.

ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

You will stay at a local hostel (Hostal Atenas) for your first three days in Granada. Once there, you will participate in a series of activities and visits that will ease your transition into the new culture and reinforce your knowledge of Granada and Spain. These orientations will give you practical information that will be of great use throughout the semester.

During the orientation, the program will not provide meals; you will be able to dine at the local restaurant of your choice. Your family will pick you up at the hostel and escort you to their home. Don't worry; Miguel Angel and Nerea will explain everything when you get there.

RESIDENT DIRECTORS

Miguel Angel Galindo will be the Resident Director during your stay in Granada. He earned his Ph.D. in Spanish Linguistics at the University of Illinois Department of Spanish, Italian and Portuguese. Nerea Muguerza, the Assistant Director, also earned her Master's Degree in Spanish Linguistics at the University of Illinois Department of Spanish, Italian and Portuguese.

Both of them will be available to students throughout the semester. They will assist you with the everyday aspects of the program, meet you at the airport, advise on academic issues, help with registration in Spain, and with adjustments to living in a different environment. They will hold regular office hours at CEGRÍ to provide assistance as needed. While the Resident Director and the Assistant Director are always available for a real emergency (you will be given an emergency phone number for that purpose once you arrive in Spain) they are **NOT** expected to be "on call" 24 hours a day for general purposes. Please be courteous and respect their privacy if they cannot see you outside of office hours.

The following are the most important services provided by the Resident Director/Assistant Director:

1. Liaison between you and the University of Illinois or Wisconsin.
2. Liaison, along with the CEGRÍ housing coordinator, between you and your host family. It is important to speak to them if you have any questions or concerns about your living situation.
3. General advice on cultural or personal difficulties.
4. Assistance when any important documents are lost. Any costs associated with the replacement of a passport and other documents are your responsibility.
5. Assistance with medical questions.

EXCURSIONS

Program Excursions (*Subject to change based on COVID requirements/restrictions, etc*)

You will participate in at least two full-group excursions during the semester. Common excursions have been an overnight trip to the Alpujarra (in the mountains) and a day trip to Córdoba. (**Note:** These are subject to change based on conditions in Granada.) There will also be dinners and small group activities organized by the program. For each of these, the program pays for transportation and some meals, while you are expected to pay for some meals and incidentals. You cannot be refunded the cost of an excursion from your program fees if you choose not to attend. You will be given more information on excursions once you arrive in Spain.

Independent Travel

If you plan to travel outside Granada, **YOU MUST LEAVE A DETAILED TRAVEL ITINERARY WITH THE RESIDENT DIRECTORS** with the exact destination(s), mode of travel, dates, and phone numbers where he can reach you. **YOU MUST ALSO NOTIFY YOUR HOST FAMILY AND PARENT/GUARDIAN IN THE U.S. OF YOUR PLANS.**

IV. ACADEMICS

CEGRÍ

CEGRÍ is a private school that specializes in teaching Spanish language and culture to U.S. students. There are no Spanish students at CEGRÍ. During the 3-day orientation in Granada by program staff, students will take a Spanish placement test (which consists of a fill in the gaps exercise and a short essay) and will be placed at the appropriate level.

The CEGRÍ professors are wonderful, caring, and fun. However, their style of teaching may initially surprise you. They will be very direct in demanding your participation in class. They will also be straightforward about mistakes students make or areas in which students need improvement. This style will help you grow within the Spanish classroom context; the best way to embrace it is to participate enthusiastically in class (with your words, body language, etc.). Also realize professors may appear to expect more of you than you are used to; since class sizes will be small, professors at CEGRÍ take advantage of the opportunity to be more hands-on and personal with students. You will be expected to use only Spanish at CEGRÍ.

Typical Class Schedule

The most typical class schedule would have you in one or two classes each morning, between 9am and 3pm, and/or one or two classes each afternoon, between 4:30pm and 8:15pm. These are very common class and work times for Andalusians. Classes are Monday – Thursday.

Add/Drop Policy

CEGRÍ normally allows changes in your course selection during the first one to two weeks of classes. You will receive more information at the on-site academic orientation.

Grading Scales

The grades UIUC students receive at CEGRÍ will show up on the UIUC transcript as follows (students from UIC, Wisconsin, and other schools should consult with their study abroad office for grading scales):

| | | | |
|----------------|----|----------------|----|
| 100 - 96.50= | A+ | 76.49 - 72.50= | C |
| 96.49 - 92.5= | A | 72.49 - 69.50= | C- |
| 92.49 - 89.50= | A- | 69.49 - 66.50= | D+ |
| 89.49 - 86.50= | B+ | 66.49 - 62.50= | D |
| 86.49 - 82.50= | B | 62.49 - 59.50= | D- |
| 82.49 - 79.50= | B- | 59.49 - 0= | F |
| 79.49 - 76.50= | C+ | | |

If you feel a grade has been listed on your transcript in error, it is your responsibility to contact CEGRÍ directly (info@cegri.edu.es). The study abroad office and the University of Illinois cannot change your grade once the program has finished (or during it, for that matter).

E-mail

Students will have access to e-mail and internet at CEGRÍ and their host families via wi-fi. There are also cafés in Granada where you can access internet. You will receive additional information during the on-site orientation.

Laptops and Internet

Students should take a laptop to Granada for their classwork and e-mail (you will have access to a printer at CEGRÍ). It is highly recommended to purchase special insurance to cover damage or theft of the laptop. Generally, all the host families have internet available in their home stays.

V. THE HOME STAY

Spanish Family and Community Structure

You will be placed with a family with whom you will live during your stay (your assignment will be e-mailed to you slightly before your departure). It is through the family that you will have your first introduction to

Spanish social structure. There will be a range of families with whom you can be placed; most have hosted foreign students before, but some may be unfamiliar with hosting foreigners. Remember, no matter what the structure, your host family is there to introduce you to Spanish society and culture.

Just as there is a period of adjustment to the new academic environment, you will surely need time to get used to your host family. As a rule, students in the U.S. go away to complete their college education, although students in Spain often live at home and go to school in their hometown. If they do go away, many Spaniards live with relatives or rent rooms with local Spanish families, as you will be doing. Spanish university students do not have as much independence and privacy as their North American counterparts.

Another significant difference between Spanish and U.S. culture is family structure. In Spain, the family tends to be extended rather than nuclear. People have close relationships with their grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and even distant cousins. In general, children grow up experiencing a broader network of family members than do children in the United States. A high value is placed on kinship, and a special relationship, even responsibility, is acknowledged among family members.

Because you will be functioning as part of the family, in a way, with all the advantages that this implies, when you leave Spain, the first thing you must do is to write to your host family to thank them for their hospitality and to let them know you arrived home safely. We have learned, to our chagrin, that U.S. students are famous for leaving and promptly forgetting their Spanish families. It is true that our society is very lax about such gestures, but our casual attitude of courtesy is considered rude within the framework of Spanish society. Some families would not agree to host another U.S. student because of hurt feelings. Please do not let us down!

Your Role in the Spanish Household

Although you will be considered a special person in the household in one sense, you must be careful not to take advantage of this status. Make an effort to find out what the household schedules are for meals, getting up, using hot water for showers, and all other family activities. If you come in late at night, make sure you are as quiet as you would be in your parents' home. If you will not be present for meals, you must let your Spanish mother know in advance so that she may plan accordingly. Your family may also ask you to accompany them on certain activities or excursions. These provide great opportunities to learn more about Spanish culture first-hand, and should be taken advantage of whenever possible.

You will be a newcomer in the household and as such you may want to act more as a guest, at least initially. For instance, ask for a drink or something to eat until you are told that you can help yourself. You must make your own bed, straighten your room and offer to help out as you would when visiting relatives. Female students may also find that the family worries if you are out late, so be conscious of their feelings and concern for you.

To avoid potential problems with your host family, remember that the keys to a successful homestay experience are **FLEXIBILITY** and **COMMUNICATION**! You will go through an adjustment curve with ups and downs; just ride it out and it will turn out great. Be flexible in your attitudes toward the Spanish lifestyle, to the differences in food, customs, etc. Furthermore, while you may feel self-conscious about your ability to speak Spanish, letting your host family know how you feel or what may be bothering you will make things easier for both of you. Finally, if for some reason you wish to change host families, speak to the Housing Coordinator at CEGRÍ. Moving, provided the student has given appropriate notice to both the housing coordinators and the host family (this issue will be discussed during the on-site orientation in Granada), is usually not a problem.

Laundry

In most cases, your Spanish host mother will do your laundry with the family's, usually once a week (2 loads: 1 of whites & 1 of colors). As a rule, dry cleaning service in Spain is readily available and reasonably priced.

House Key

Your host family will give you a set of house keys when you arrive, so that you may come and go without disturbing anyone. Be conscientious in your care of the key; Spaniards are security-conscious and would probably replace locks if you lost your key.

Visitors

As you are a guest in your Spanish home, you should not invite someone without prior permission from your host family. Doing so can be a source of great embarrassment and unnecessary hard feelings. If you cannot make arrangements with your host family, invite your friends to a café, restaurant, club, or disco. Absolutely no overnight visitors of the opposite gender are permitted if they are not members of your immediate family; breaking this rule can be cause for dismissal from the program.

Telephone Calls

The Spanish landline telephone system is, especially for long-distance and international calls, quite expensive. Consequently, be aware that you may not be allowed to make telephone calls from your home in Spain, even those you would normally make in the U.S. You may receive calls at home, but please remind friends and family overseas of the 7-hour time difference between Central Standard Time in the U.S. and Spain (8 AM in Chicago will be 3 PM in Spain). You may want to discuss with your host family the best time to receive calls from the U.S., so as not to disrupt your host family's routine.

All students should have a cell phone for making and receiving local calls, and receiving international calls. You will learn more about cell phone options during orientation in Granada.

The following are the primary options for calling overseas:

- 1) Have them call you. It is much cheaper to call from the U.S. than from Spain. Arrange for a day and time for friends and family to call from the States when you can be by the phone to receive their call. You may want to contact your phone carrier before leaving to learn of current specials and offers your friends and family may subscribe to in the U.S.
- 2) Internet calling. Using a program such as Skype, you can call from a computer (using headphones and a microphone) to another computer or a telephone.

VI. LEARNING ABOUT SPAIN

An important part of your personal preparation is familiarizing yourself with Spain - its people, geography, languages, political and educational systems, issues, and influences. When U.S. students arrive overseas, many, to their embarrassment, realize they know very little about the host country, the European Union, or their own country. Take advantage of the wealth of information available from written and human sources before you leave.

To help you with transition familiarize yourself with Spanish current events and history before you leave. Written sources are everywhere. You can become informed about current events by reading Spanish newspapers such as El País (<http://www.elpais.es>) or El Mundo (<http://www.elmundo.es>). The New York Times, BBC, Christian Science Monitor, and Wall Street Journal are generally regarded as having good coverage

of international news. You should also be prepared to discuss United States history and current politics; these are areas of compelling interest to many Europeans and your inside perspective will be greatly appreciated.

Other sources of information on your host country are people on campus: the faculty who teach relevant courses, reference librarians, international students, and former study abroad students. No matter what your interests or hobbies, you can find information on how the people in your host country pursue them.

Granada, Andalucía and Spain

Spain shares the Iberian Peninsula with Portugal and has coasts on the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the Mediterranean Sea to the south and east, and the Bay of Biscay to the north; it has Europe's longest coastline. Although packed into an area smaller than Texas, Spain presents wide geographical variations. The country is almost as mountainous as Switzerland, yet there are areas with dense tropical vegetation, thick forests, endless plains, desert-like regions, and beaches.

Granada is located in the autonomous community of Andalucía. This region has the highest peaks on the Iberian Peninsula (the peaks of Mulhacén and Veleta in the Sierra Nevada mountain range) as well as fertile valleys, which produce some of the best olives in the world. Olive groves abound in the south of Spain, and form an important part of the economy and local cuisine. Andalucía is also home to the Costa del Sol, a popular beach and golf resort area where Spaniards and foreigners alike vacation in the warm Mediterranean sun.

Life in Granada

Along with Sevilla, Córdoba and Málaga, Granada is one of the largest cities in Andalucía with a population of approximately 300,000. Being a larger town, there is a wealth of activities available to you in Granada. Students have the opportunity to experience the rich cultural life of the city, which includes numerous theatres, movies, ballet, concerts, museums, etc. Past students have joined relatively inexpensive health clubs or volunteered for social service agencies. There are several resort towns on the Costa Tropical (Granada) and the Costa del Sol (Málaga), a short bus ride away. There is also fantastic skiing and hiking in the Sierra Nevada mountains.

As most students love to point out upon their return from Spain, some find the pace of life slower than what you may be used to, particularly in southern Spain. This doesn't mean that people in Spain are not serious or do not take their commitments seriously. Many Andalusians simply have a more relaxed attitude about time and life in general than we tend to have in the U.S. Of course, this is a complex issue, manifesting itself in different ways throughout different times/events of the day. Whereas a person would certainly show up on time for a dentist appointment, they may be a few minutes late meeting with a friend that night after work for a drink. With the dentist there is an expectation to arrive on time, whereas with a friend or with family, there may be a shared understanding of flexibility in terms of punctuality.

Prime examples of this attitude are the concept of siesta, the fiestas and ferias celebrated throughout the year. Particularly in the south, every day in the early afternoon, stores, schools and many businesses shut down for a few hours as people take time to have lunch with friends or family. The siesta often does not imply sleeping; it does show the importance of taking the time for a meal with those close to you.

This celebratory attitude of the Spaniards carries over into daily activities. Spanish people are social, frequently going to restaurants and bars with friends and family. Students should note, however, that while it may be more common for students in Spain to go out with friends at night to clubs or cafés, the Spanish dress code for such occasions is not as casual as that of the typical college campus in the States. Gym shoes are worn for sports, not much in the street. Although you will see many of the same styles there as in the U.S., Spaniards tend to take good care of their appearance more often than U.S. students. Take your cues from your Spanish peers and you will start to pick up on the subtleties.

Making Spanish Friends

When talking about making friends while abroad, you first need to ask yourself: How many international students did you approach today? If you have to make friends, you have to take initiative to talk to them. You must remember that Spanish college students will be studying and working as they would in any given semester. You are the one in a new place and experience. So, whereas they will most likely be receptive if you approach them or make suggestions about getting together, it will most often need to be your idea and efforts to make it happen. Remember, too, that the Spanish university students are on a different schedule than you. They will be arriving in Granada to start classes in early October, and will have exams in January-February, and June-July.

Challenging Stereotypes: Gender Relations in Spain

Many stereotypes of Spanish culture and society have entered into U.S. culture - not all are favorable. Andalucía and Spain in general are incredibly diverse. In our stereotypes of Spain, we tend to simplify it, reducing its complexity.

U.S. students may carry with them the stereotype that gender roles are very traditional in Spain and that gender relations are defined by a principle of strong male dominance (*machismo*). This is an image that often comes to us through film and literature. There is a related tendency to see women as willing to be subservient to men, staying within the household, raising families, and arranging their days around anticipating their husbands', fathers', and sons' needs. Through much of Spain, this traditional male-dominated structure has faded quite a bit. As in the U.S., women often have jobs, and even women who do not work outside the home have active lives in the community. Your time in Spain should challenge the idea that men and women are locked into traditional roles.

You should not, however, take this to mean that relationships between men and women or between family members are replicas of relationships in the U.S. As mentioned previously, family ties tend to be very close. A great deal of respect is paid to older people, be they parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, or older friends. Because so many young people do live at home until they are married, they finish college or find a job, they remain respectful of and close to their parents throughout their lives.

Another difference, which you are likely to observe and/or experience, is “cat-calling” in the street. Although not considered refined behavior, it is not uncommon for men or groups of men to occasionally direct comments, whistles, or hissing at a young woman. While this may prove disagreeable and border on harassment, the most effective strategy is to avoid eye contact and ignore it, as long as you do not feel in danger. Watch how Spanish women react when they receive the same and try adopting their stance. There may come a point where a woman feels threatened by this experience. To avoid such a situation, always take key safety precautions: be alert of where you are, don’t walk alone at night, stay in well-lit areas, and, most importantly, realize that the effects of alcohol make you more vulnerable.

VII. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Climate

Granada’s weather, with very hot summers and **cold winters**, is not typical of Mediterranean regions, where the summers are hot and humid and winters are mild (although winters in Granada are, of course, milder than in the northern Midwest!). The temperature does drop down to the 20s and 30s in the winter (the coldest months are December, January and February) and may occasionally get colder (once in a while there is even snow in the city!), so **bring warm clothes**. Keep in mind that some homes in Granada do not have central heating; consequently, indoor temperatures can be quite a bit cooler than in the U.S. Don’t be surprised if you find yourself walking around the house in heavy clothes during the winter. As always, layering is strongly suggested.

During the colder months, you may see your host family using their “estufa” or “braser,” a sort of space heater. “Braseros” resemble tables, under which small electric heaters are placed. A thick table cloth is sometimes thrown over the “braser” to keep the heat in, and family members sit around the table with their feet under the table cloth to discuss the day’s events, read, or watch TV. Don’t pass up the opportunity to join in the conversation, and warm your toes at the same time!

What to Pack - Travel Light

The bottom line is to travel light. One suitcase is **plenty**. There are a lot of shopping opportunities in Spain so most people end up buying clothes there anyway. For international travel, check with the airline to determine the number, size and weight of bags they will accept. You may be charged for extra pieces or weight. You may usually carry on the plane one smaller piece plus a purse, camera gear, umbrella, or coat. For travel within Spain, different airlines have different weight restrictions for checked luggage—many of the new, low cost airlines are very strict so don’t get caught in the airport having to pay a fine for being over the limit! The temptation is to take as much as the airline allows: **don't do it**. You'll be miserable dragging your luggage around and will go out of your mind as you prepare to return home, trying to pack everything you brought with you plus everything you've acquired in your travels. As a rule, you should keep your hands as free as possible to avoid confusion and maintain safety.

Make luggage tags to identify all of your luggage items, and in the case these fall off, you should also stick identification labels on the **inside** of your suitcases. **Do not pack your passport, travel documents, tickets, or valuables in your suitcase.** If at all possible, keep these items on yourself in a money belt, an inside jacket pocket, or a bag or pack that you can wear slung across your chest. **Never put important papers or money in a backpack -- you have no control over what you cannot see.** Pickpockets are VERY skillful in Spain, and throughout Europe, particularly on public transportation!

Keep track of your documents. In a location separate from the documents, keep photocopies and a record of the number, place of issue, and date of expiration of your passport and student visa, credit cards, as well as the serial numbers of traveler's checks. Also leave copies of important documents as well as the serial numbers of your traveler’s checks with a trusted person back home. These can then be faxed or express-mailed in emergency. Access to these copies will facilitate replacement of documents.

Clothing

As mentioned, you will need clothes suitable for heat and cold. When you pack, keep your activities in mind as well. You should have nice jeans or dress pants/skirts for classes and informal occasions; sporting gear; and nicer clothing for more formal occasions. The following is a checklist of items you might consider bringing. Bring enough clothes for one week, and you can wash them each week. In addition to needing house shoes for the cold, you will also need them throughout the semester, as Spaniards generally don’t go barefoot inside the house. Note that you will be walking **A LOT**, especially during orientation. Bring comfortable walking shoes.

| Women | Men |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| --skirts, nice jeans, and dress pants | --nice jeans, casual and dress pants |
| --dress | --sports jacket and tie |
| --T-shirts and nice tops | --T-shirts and sports shirts |
| --2-3 blouses | --long-sleeved dress shirts |
| --a light and a warm sweater | --a light and a warm sweater |
| --warm pajamas, robe and slippers | --warm pajamas, robe and slippers |
| --light and heavy stockings and socks | --light and heavy socks |
| --nice walking shoes | --nice walking shoes |
| --gym shoes | --gym shoes |

| | |
|--|---|
| --dress shoes | --dress shoes |
| --wool-lined jacket or heavy coat, warm hat & gloves and a gore-tex jacket | -- wool-lined jacket or heavy coat, warm hat & gloves and a gore-tex jacket |

Other suggested items to bring

Many students will prefer to have their own towel, so they can also take it when traveling. If you don't have a towel, your family will provide it; however, it will not be common for your family to provide a washcloth. Your family will provide all bed linens and a pillow.

- Personal hygiene kit: Comb, brush, toothbrush & paste, shampoo, shaving gear, washcloth, etc.
- Any prescription medicine you must take in sufficient quantity. It is important to bring a copy of the prescription with you (in your carry-on, for airline security purposes) in case you run out and also for immigration customs. You also may not find the exact equivalent of what you take in the U.S.
- Glasses/contacts with copy of prescription. If possible, bring an extra pair of lenses, as replacements can be very expensive. Also bring enough enzymatic cleaner to last the semester--it too is expensive in Spain.
- Portable alarm clock (not electric)
- Spanish/English dictionary.
- Fold-up umbrella.
- If you have a digital camera, bring an extra memory card or two.
- Address book (filled in!) and plenty of space for new addresses.
- Photos of your family: Your Spanish family and friends will enjoy seeing these and they make good conversation starters.
- Money belt or pouch to wear around your neck or waist for cash, IDs, etc.
- A padlock: If you are staying in hostels while traveling, you may be required to provide your own lock for your luggage.
- Copy of your favorite recipe, in case you have a chance to cook for your family.
- Souvenir/gift from home for your Spanish family. (This should be something small and inexpensive; it can be one gift for the whole family or a very small gift for each person in the family. Give them something that you think will remind them of you. Write up a little story in Spanish that you can tell them as you give the gift.)
- Notebook to use as a **journal** while you're in Spain. (This is a great way to remember your time there.)
- Extra photocopy of your credit cards and the photo page (and visa page) of your passport.
- A change purse, as much of the money is coins and sometimes you will have a huge load to carry around

Toiletry Articles

Although a full range of toiletry articles and cosmetics are available in Spain, you should bring enough of your own to last about two weeks. This will save you the trouble of having to look for these items until you are familiar with the city. U.S. brands are very expensive, so consider buying the local equivalent.

Electric Appliances

Spain standard voltage is 220 (50 cycles). Many U.S. appliances will work in Spain if used with a good quality 110-220 voltage converter. The best idea is to not bring anything electric with you; you can get items there, such as a hair dryer, etc. It's the same throughout Europe - 220V, 50Hz. Plugs have two round pins instead of flat, parallel pins. You can buy plug adaptors (from US to Spain type) for your laptops, etc. in electric stores in Granada.

Money Issues

Carry different sources of money, such as an ATM card, traveler's checks, and a little cash. Most students find that the easiest and safest way to handle their finances in Spain is to use their regular ATM card. There are ATM machines all over Spain. Call your bank to verify that your card will work in Europe, and ask for a listing of the banks overseas that will accept your card. **You may need to apply for an international PIN number in**

order for your card to work outside the U.S. Look on the back of your card to make sure it has the logo of an international network, such as Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, or Cirrus. For emergencies, we recommend that you bring a Visa, MasterCard, or American Express credit card, which may also be used to withdraw cash. Again, make sure that you have an internationally valid PIN number.

Changing Money

The monetary unit of Spain and much of Europe is the Euro. Before you leave the U.S., you may want to change some money at a bank which handles foreign currency or at the airport. This will give you money for emergencies, tipping in the airport or taxi, if you receive help with your luggage, or buying a phone card, for example. After a few days in Spain, you will know your city better and be able to handle money transactions on your own.

Traveler's checks, while increasingly falling out of favor for students abroad, do provide you with a safeguard in case of theft. Unlike cash, traveler's checks can be replaced if lost or stolen if you have wisely kept a record of the serial numbers in a safe place. American Express traveler's checks are the most widely-accepted. However, some people report that traveler's checks are more difficult than using other kinds of money. They are not accepted at many hostels, shops, or cheaper restaurants. When cashing traveler's checks, you must show your passport.

Private exchange offices are safe places to exchange money, but will charge a higher fee than a bank. They may also refuse your transaction if you intend to change less than a pre-set amount, a \$500 or \$1,000 minimum is common. The exchange offices can be convenient, however, as they usually have much longer hours than banks and are open on Saturdays.

Exchange rates are generally better with ATM or credit cards than with cash or traveler's checks. You should ask your bank, however, if they charge a fee to use the card overseas, and its amount per transaction. ATMs are particularly handy in emergencies, as your family in the U.S. can deposit more funds into your account as needed. In most cases, you can then withdraw funds from overseas within a few hours to one day. In this way, you avoid potentially losing cash or traveler's checks. Credit cards can often be used in the same way as an ATM card, but their transaction fees are usually much higher than a regular debit card and you will start to accrue interest on the withdrawal from the day you make the transaction.

We do NOT, however, recommend your ATM card to be your only source of cash during the semester. Make sure that you do bring some traveler's checks, cash or a credit card with you. This is especially important if you travel to smaller towns in Spain or to other European countries where ATM machines may be hard to find or only accept European cards.

Finally, if you need money sent to you in a hurry, you can have it sent via American Express, Citibank or Western Union. (You do not need to have an American Express card or account at Citibank for this transaction). There is a charge for sending money this way, but it is comparatively safe and fast (15 minutes with American Express and Western Union; one to two days with Citibank). You will need a photo ID (usually a passport) to collect the money. The fees are relatively high for this kind of transaction, so you may want to ask for money to be deposited in your U.S. bank account if you have an ATM card you can use.

Safety

In terms of protecting your belongings, valuables and cash, you should take the same precautions that you would in any major U.S. city, only more so. Leave your best jewelry at home in the States. **Don't travel with anything that you are not prepared to lose.** Although some cities in Spain, such as Granada, have the

reputation of being relatively safe and probably safer than most U.S. cities, you do not need to invite trouble by flashing jewelry, watches, wallets or iPads, iPhones, etc. Be careful with your camera. It's best to have a sturdy camera bag, rather than having it exposed loosely around your neck or shoulder. This is particularly true on buses and trains, where robberies can occur more easily. When riding in a taxi, always keep such items on your person - do not put purses or cameras in the trunk. You may forget them.

Pick pocketing is problematic in Spain due to the large influx of tourists (especially during summer). Pay particular attention to groups of people – maybe children, often accompanied by women with babies - near tourist areas. They work in groups to divert the tourist's attention, often by offering you a newspaper to buy, blocking your view and confusing you, while one goes through your pockets and bags. No one can guarantee that you won't have an unpleasant experience in Spain, but by using the same common-sense precautions you would in any large city, you will do a lot to ensure that your time in Spain is fully positive. Also be careful around ATM machines; if someone is watching you, walk away without getting cash. Also avoid ATM machines at night.

Transportation

Public transportation is quite good in Spain and especially convenient in Granada. The city has an efficient system of buses, which run every fifteen minutes or so during the day. Also, many bus companies have several daily departures from Granada to points all over Spain. In addition, RENFE, the Spanish national rail system, has an office in downtown Granada where you can book tickets to almost any city in Europe. Be especially alert when you board and leave buses and trains - these are favorite places for pickpockets - and NEVER leave bags, coats, purses, etc. unattended. If sleeping on a train, keep valuables on your person.

Cellphone plans:

Cellular plans in Spain are pretty affordable. There are three big companies: *Movistar*, *Vodafone* and *Orange* that offer multiple possibilities since they have their own net. However, there are many other smaller carriers that offer plans (including phone calls + internet) in a more affordable way. Some of these companies are *Symio*, *Lowi* or *PepePhone*. Usually prepaid plans are about 20 € or so but depend on the customer preferences.

Mail

Please have your friends and family address letters and packages this way:

Your Name

CEGRÍ

C/ Sacristía de San Matías, 12

18009 GRANADA

ESPAÑA

Sending Packages from Home

IMPORTANT - When you have your relatives send packages to CEGRÍ, they should do so through the regular post office or UPS. Also, make sure your relatives do not declare the value of the contents and make sure that the contents are marked "used (personal items)". If a value is declared or it is not clearly defined that the goods are "used (personal goods)," the package will go through customs and you will then be charged a high fee. To claim your package, you will then have to pay the customs fee, which can be expensive. This process can take several weeks.

Food

Adjustments to food and eating patterns are among the first changes you will have to cope with in a new culture. Often, when people talk about what they miss from the U.S., they'll talk in terms of McDonalds, or pizza, or any other favorite food. If you know what to expect in the way of food and meals, you'll have an

easier time adjusting.

In Spain, people eat three to four meals a day. Breakfasts are lighter than in the U.S. and normally consist of “café con leche”, bread and butter, pastries, or “una tostada” with fresh tomato spread and olive oil. Lunch, usually served around 2 or 3 in the afternoon, tends to be the biggest meal of the day – usually three courses followed by coffee. Dinner is served around 9 or 10 in the evening and is a bit smaller than lunch. Instead of eating a large

dinner, many people in Granada prefer to go out for tapas in a café or bar. All tapas in Granada cafés are free of charge (you just pay for a drink), making them a great way for even the tightest budgets to enjoy eating out.

Spanish cuisine is based on eggs, rice, potatoes, vegetables, legumes, fish, chicken and pork. As you can imagine, quite a bit of olive oil is used, particularly in the south. While most lunches and dinners do center on meat or seafood dishes, vegetarians should not despair: there are plenty of meatless dishes available. Living with a Spanish family, it is important to communicate and be patient. You can tell your family at the beginning exactly what you will and will not eat and why, so as not to cause bad feelings, or wait and see if you might be surprised by new things you like.

Spanish Spoken in Spain

Although Spanish is a language which links much of Latin America and Spain, there is wide variability in Spanish from country-to-country and region-to-region. In Spain, you may run into some forms of Spanish that you haven't learned in the classroom. For example, it's customary in Spain to use "vosotros" for the familiar, plural you.

For more information on Castilian Spanish, see Appendix 2.

U.S. Customs

When you re-enter the U.S., Customs require you to declare all items purchased abroad that you are bringing home with you. It is wise to keep an account of the costs of purchases and sales slips. U.S. Customs officials have the right to ask for and inspect them. Check the following website for current policies:

<http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation/kbyg/>

See Rick Steve's webpage for info on how to claim VAT (Value-Added Tax) refunds of goods bought in the European Union when returning to the US (<http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/vat.htm>).

Discrimination

Discrimination against minorities is illegal in most countries; it does occur, nevertheless. Discrimination is built on negative racial stereotypes, which are influenced by a variety of factors, including the media. If you believe that you are being discriminated against, please discuss it with on-site program staff.

Despite what the law says, there is discrimination in Spain. The ethnic group most commonly affected is the Romani people (commonly referred to as Gypsies). This discrimination is mainly based on economic reasons. They are often portrayed as thieves and swindlers. It should be kept in mind, however, that these minorities have less access to education or work in Spain and have had social activities severely restricted. Because Spain has one of the largest Romani populations in Europe, take the time do some investigating on the history and current situation of these people.

On occasion, students on our programs have experienced discrimination. In Barcelona, a student was involved in a fight with what they described as neo-Nazis. There have been times when African-American students have not been allowed into bars or clubs for false reasons, such as not having a membership card. This can be very frustrating, but students affected by such discrimination should try to keep in mind that one of the primary reasons for your participation in a study abroad program is to learn about a variety of behaviors of people. Past students affected by this have recommended remaining cautious for your safety, while keeping the incident in perspective and focusing on the majority of Spaniards who are open to people of all ethnic groups. This information is not intended to scare you, just to make you aware of some current attitudes in portions of Spanish society that you may encounter.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment, as defined by law, is any unwanted sexual gesture, physical contact, or statement that is offensive, humiliating, or an interference with required tasks or career opportunities. You will be entering a different culture and must realize that, in some instances, the foreign methods of communication may be uncomfortable for you. Spaniards touch in a much more open fashion than common in the U.S. It is not uncommon for men to hug, kiss, or pat each other heartily on the shoulder when greeting, for example. A single kiss on each cheek is the common greeting for women and men alike, even with people they have just been introduced to. Staring is also common. Within the cultural context, this is not viewed as harassment. If communication becomes uncomfortable with a colleague, housemate, or other regular contact, even after acknowledging cultural differences, we would encourage you to sit down and talk to the individual. This provides the other person a chance to explain the culture and affords you the same opportunity. You may discuss it with your host family and/or fellow students. If you do not feel comfortable speaking directly to the person in question, please discuss the matter with the on-site program staff.

Drugs

European drug penalties are much more severe than in the United States. Prison for months to years and/or deportation are common sentences. The local Spanish laws will apply to you during your study abroad program, just as they would to any Spaniard.

Working abroad

U.S. citizens are not allowed to work in Spain without a special visa. You could be deported if found working illegally.

Appendix 1

List of Food Items and Menu Samples

The following is a list of items you might be served at a restaurant or at home.

Staples

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Tortilla española | Spanish omelette with eggs and potatoes |
| tallarines (espagueti) | spaghetti |
| fideos | noodles or pasta |
| judías | beans |
| guisantes | peas |
| habas | lima beans |
| lentejas | lentils |
| garbanzo | chick peas |
| aceitunas | olives |
| churros | sweet, fried dough strips, often eaten with hot chocolate |
| gazpacho | cold tomato soup |
| sopa | any kind of water-based soup |
| caldo | broth-based soup |

Meat

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Jamón serrano or iberico | cured ham (prosciutto) |
| chorizo | spicy sausage |
| salchicha | long thin sausage, slightly less spicy |
| morcilla | blood sausage |
| riñones | kidney |
| mollejas | sweetbread |
| hígado | liver |
| empanadas | turnovers usually with a meat filling |
| milanesa | a thin patty of beef or chicken, breaded and fried |
| rabo de toro | oxtail |

Fish

| | |
|------------|---|
| calamares | small squid, fried or sauteed in garlic and lemon |
| anchoas | anchovies |
| corvina | usually a filet of whitefish (croaker) |
| merluza | usually a filet of whitefish (hake) |
| mariscos | shellfish of any kind |
| gambas | shrimp |
| ostras | oysters |
| almejas | clams |
| mejillones | mussels |

Drinks

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| casera | soda |
| agua mineral sin gas | non-carbonated mineral water |
| agua mineral con gas | carbonated mineral water |
| Rioja | the most common Spanish red wine, from La Rioja region |
| zumos | juice |
| agua del grifo | tap water (perfectly safe in Spain) |

Appendix 2

Spanish Spoken in Spain

Although hard to understand at first, you will adjust and eventually will have a very easy time understanding Andalusian accents! Idioms and slang especially change from country to country. With patience and help from your family and professors, you'll be able to pick up the slang specific to your region in Spain.

Andalusians have developed their own ingratiating way of speaking “e’pañó” (Español). At first, it may seem to you that they are speaking fast as a bullet with a pronounced lisp and a tendency to drop consonants. Don’t worry, you will quickly pick up the Andalusian way and have a great time in the process. **Don't get frustrated!** Getting used to a new language is tiring at first, but just when you may feel that you’re not understanding or communicating anything, a light will go on all of a sudden and you’ll realize you’re near fluent! So, hang in there and keep trying.

Some Suggestions to improve your Spanish language ability:

- ∞ Speak Spanish as much as possible: at home, at school/at the university, with friends.
- ∞ Don't be shy about making mistakes. Most people are quite patient and helpful. In fact, most will feel honored that you should want to learn their language and will be patiently receptive to your initial stumbling and stammering. So, keep struggling; it will soon come easily.
- ∞ Keep a notebook of new words. Whenever you hear a word you do not know, write it down. It then becomes more familiar. You might want to divide a notebook onto categories, i.e., adjectives, nouns, verbs, useful phrases, etc.
- ∞ Review your grammar: verb tenses (especially the subjunctive), gender and number of nouns and their agreement with articles and adjectives, prepositions and prepositional phrases, etc.
- ∞ Use a Spanish-Spanish dictionary; you'll learn more in the long run. It will take longer at first, but your vocabulary will increase rapidly.
- ∞ Expose yourself to Spanish in a variety of media: listen to conversations and the radio, watch Spanish television, go to movies and theatre, listen to Spanish music, read newspapers and magazines, go to football (soccer) games and listen to the cheers, songs and exchanges. The greater and more varied the exposure, the faster you will learn.

Uso de Vosotros

In Spain, “vosotros” replaces the familiar form of “ustedes”. As elsewhere, “usted” is used formally, when talking to an older person, professor or director of a firm. The plural “ustedes”, however, is used in Spain only to address more than one such person formally, while “vosotros” is used in an informal context, to address a group of friends, for example.

MODO INDICATIVO

| PRESENTE | | -AR | -ER | -IR |
|----------|-------------|----------|---------|-----------|
| | TÚ | Cant-as | Com-es | Escrib-es |
| | VOSOTROS/AS | Cant-áis | Com-éis | Escrib-ís |

| PRETÉRITO PERFECTO (= PRESENTE PERFECTO) | | -AR | -ER | -IR |
|--|-------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| | TÚ | Has cantado | Has comido | Has escrito |
| | VOSOTROS/AS | Habéis cantado | Habéis comido | Habéis escrito |

| | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| PRETÉRITO IMPERFECTO | | -AR | -ER | -IR |
| | TÚ | Cant-abas | Com-ías | Escrib-ías |
| | VOSOTROS/AS | Cant-abais | Com-íais | Escrib-íais |

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|
| PRETÉRITO INDEFINIDO (=PRETÉRITO PERFECTO SIMPLE = PRETÉRITO en USA) | | -AR | -ER | -IR |
| | TÚ | Cant-aste | Com-iste | Escrib-iste |
| | VOSOTROS/AS | Cant-asteis | Com-isteis | Escrib-isteis |

| | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| FUTURO SIMPLE | | -AR | -ER | -IR |
| | TÚ | cantarás | comerás | escribirás |
| | VOSOTROS/AS | cantaréis | comeréis | escribiréis |

| | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| CONDICIONAL SIMPLE | | -AR | -ER | -IR |
| | TÚ | cantarías | comerías | escribirías |
| | VOSOTROS/AS | cantaríais | comeríais | escribiríais |

MODO SUBJUNTIVO

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| PRESENTE | | -AR | -ER | -IR |
| | TÚ | Cant-es | Com-as | Escrib-as |
| | VOSOTROS/AS | Cant-éis | Com-áis | Escrib-áis |

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| PRETÉRITO PERFECTO (= PRESENTE PERFECTO) | | -AR | -ER | -IR |
| | TÚ | Hayas cantado | Hayas comido | Hayas escrito |
| | VOSOTROS/AS | Hayáis cantado | Hayáis comido | Hayáis escrito |

| | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| PRETÉRITO IMPERFECTO | | -AR | -ER | -IR |
| | TÚ | Cantaras/ cantases | Comieras/ comieses | Escribieras/ escribieses |
| | VOSOTROS/AS | Canterais/ cantaseis | Comierais/ comieseis | Escribierais/ escribieseis |

MODO IMPERATIVO

| | AFIRMATIVO | | | NEGATIVO | | |
|--------------------|------------|-------|----------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| | -ar | -er | -ir | -ar | -er | -ir |
| TÚ | canta | come | escribe | no cantes | no comas | no escribas |
| VOSOTROS/AS | cantad | comed | escribid | no cantéis | no comáis | no escribáis |